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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A multi-media interactive play system, comprising:
  - multiple play environments, each play environment including one or more play elements arranged in a desired theme and operable by one or more play participants to achieve a desired goal or goals;
  - a tracking system associated with each said play environment for tracking each play participant and/or group of play participants playing within said play environment and for recording information representing goals achieved by and/or points awarded to each play participant or group of play participants;
  - and
  - wherein said multiple play environments are configured to share said recorded information such that play participants visiting each said play environment are recognized by the play environment as having achieved the achieved goals or awarded points represented by the recorded information.
- 5 2. The multi-media play system of Claim 1 wherein said multiple play environments are located within a single play center facility.
- 10 3. The multi-media play system of Claim 1 wherein said multiple play environments are located within multiple play center facilities.
- 15 4. The multi-media play system of Claim 1 wherein said tracking system comprises a card or sticker associated with each play participant, said card or sticker containing electronically readable information identifying each associated play participant, and one or more readers disposed within each play environment for electronically reading each said card or sticker and for recording said information representing goals achieved by each play participant or group of play participants.
- 20 5. The multi-media play system of Claim 4 wherein said electronically readable information comprises digital information stored on a magnetic strip associated with each said card.
- 25 6. The multi-media play system of Claim 4 wherein said electronically readable information comprises digital information stored on a bar code sticker worn by each said play participant.

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7. The multi-media play system of Claim 4 wherein said electronically readable information comprises information representing one or more unique attributes of each associated play participant.
8. The multi-media play system of Claim 7 wherein said electronically readable information represents one or more of the following attributes of each associated play participant: name, age, character name, character attributes, total points and type of points awarded, goals achieved, play environments visited, password, mailing address, zip code, web address, telephone number.
9. The multi-media play system of Claim 4 wherein said tracking system comprises a magnetic strip card and wherein each said card reader is further adapted to record on each said card associated with a play participant said goals achieved by said play participant.
10. The multi-media play system of Claim 1 wherein said tracking system comprises a magnetic recording medium associated with each play participant, said recording medium containing information identifying each play participant, and one or more readers disposed within each play environment for electronically reading each said recording medium and for recording said information representing goals achieved by each play participant or group of play participants.
11. The multi-media play system of Claim 10 wherein said tracking system is adapted to record said information representing goals achieved by each play participant or group of play participants on said magnetic recording medium.
12. The multi-media play system of Claim 11 wherein said multiple play environments are configured to share said achieved goal information for each play participant by reading said information from each associated magnetic recording medium.
13. The multi-media play system of Claim 10 wherein said tracking system is adapted to record said information representing goals achieved by each play participant or group of play participants on a separate database not associated with said magnetic recording medium.

14. The multi-media play system of Claim 13 wherein said multiple play environments are configured to share said achieved goal information for each play participant by periodically reading said information from said separate database.

5       15. The multi-media play system of Claim 1 wherein said multiple play environments are configured such that play participants who are recognized as having achieved certain goals and/or points are allowed to advance to a different and/or more advanced level of play than play participants who are not recognized as having achieved said certain goals and/or points.

10      16. The multi-media play system of Claim 1 wherein said multiple play environments are configured such that play participants who are recognized as having achieved certain goals and/or points are presented with more challenging goals to achieve within the play environment than play participants who are not recognized as having achieved said certain goals and/or points.

15      17. The multi-media play system of Claim 1 wherein said multiple play environments are selected from among the following groups: family entertainment centers, restaurant-associated play structures, interactive play structures, computer games, arcade games, internet, board games.

20      18. A multi-media interactive play system, comprising:  
                a number of play elements situated in a variety of play environments;  
                an electronic system that interfaces with the play elements and exchanges data with the play elements, the exchanged data comprising a participant's identity, game progress and performance; and  
                wherein the play elements are interlinked by the electronic system to define a sequence or path network along which a participant proceeds in the course of completing the play elements or reaching a stated performance standard.

25      19. The system as defined in Claim 18, wherein the exchanged data further comprise play element parameters that correspond to the participant's progress, performance, and ability level, and the set of play elements to which the participant may proceed.

5            20. The system as defined in Claim 18, wherein the play environments are selected from the group consisting of Links play centers, arcade-type games, home game systems, information appliances connected to the Internet, interactive television shows, feature films, game merchandise purchases, game website visits, and crafts areas.

10            21. The system as defined in Claim 18, wherein the electronic system comprises a central computer system interfaced with a send-receive radio frequency system.

15            22. A method of game play, comprising the steps of:

allowing a play participant to play with one or more play elements within a first play environment to achieve a first set of goals and/or a first number of points;

recording information representing said first achieved goals and/or said first achieved number of points in association with information identifying said play participant;

15            recognizing said play participant at a second play environment according to said information identifying said play participant;

reading said information representing said first achieved goals and/or said first achieved number of points;

20            allowing said play participant to play with one or more interactive play elements within said second play environment to achieve a second set of goals and/or a second number of points; and

25            wherein the character or quantity of said second set of goals and/or said second number of points are determined at least in part by said information representing said first achieved goals and/or said first achieved number of points.

23. The method of Claim 22 wherein said first and second play environments are located within a single play center facility.

24. The method of Claim 22 wherein said first and second play environments are located within multiple play center facilities.

30            25. The method of Claim 24 wherein said first and second play environments utilize different play media.

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26. The method of Claim 22 comprising the further step of providing said play participant with an identifying card or sticker, said card or sticker containing electronically readable information identifying each associated play participant, and comprising the further step of electronically reading each said card or sticker as said play participant plays within said first or second play environment.
27. The method of Claim 26 wherein said electronically readable information comprises digital information stored on a magnetic strip associated with each said card.
- 10 28. The method of Claim 26 wherein said electronically readable information comprises digital information stored on a bar code sticker worn by each said play participant.
- 15 29. The method of Claim 22 wherein said information identifying said play participant represents one or more of the following attributes of said play participant: name, age, character name, character attributes, total points and type of points awarded, goals achieved, play environments visited, password, mailing address, zip code, web address, telephone number.
30. The method of Claim 22 wherein play participants who are recognized as having previously achieved certain goals and/or points are allowed to advance to a different and/or more advanced level of play than play participants who are not recognized as having achieved said certain goals and/or points.
- 20 31. The method of Claim 22 wherein play participants who are recognized as having achieved certain goals and/or points are presented with more challenging goals to achieve within the play environment than play participants who are not recognized as having achieved said certain goals and/or points.
- 25 32. The method of Claim 22 wherein said first and second play environments are selected from among the following groups: family entertainment centers, restaurant-associated play structures, interactive play structures, computer games, arcade games, internet, board games.